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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/728,566

12/05/2003

Tae-Ahn Jahng

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12/07/2006

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EXAMINER

HOFFMAN, MARY C

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3733

DATE MAILED: 12/07/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/728,566	Applicant(s) JAHNG, TAE-AHN	
	Examiner Mary Hoffman	Art Unit 3733	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 August 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 39-42 and 44-57 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 39-42 and 44-57 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 12/5/2006 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>9/1/06</u> | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 39-42, 46-48 and 52-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Hyman (US Pat 3669133).

Hyman discloses a connection unit with first and second end portions/elements (4E and 56) and a spacer/element (4B) and a longitudinal member/connecting element (6) located in the longitudinal axial channel of the spacer (figure 2) capable of being coupled to a bone structure of a patient by at least two securing members. The unit has a male interlocking (42, tapered) and female interlocking cavity (44, flared) capable of locking to an adjacent spacer and end portion. Hyman discloses the unit can have a flexible cable (which is defined as a heavy steel or fiber rope, where the rope is composed of individual fibers which can be braided or interwoven). The spacer/element is made of metal and metal alloys (i.e. biocompatible materials).

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 39, 41-42, 46-48 and 52-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Paul et al. (US 20040236327).

Paul et al. disclose embodiments of a connection unit. In FIG. 23 and 23A, there are first and second end portions/elements (280 and 270) and a spacer/element (262) and a longitudinal member/connecting element (260/140-see paragraphs [0095] and [0114]) located in the longitudinal axial channel of the spacer capable of being coupled to a bone structure of a patient by at least two securing members. The longitudinal member is made of a braided wire.

Claims 39, 44-47, 49-53 and 55-57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ferree (US 20030220643).

Ferree a connection unit with first and second end portions/elements and a spacer/element and a longitudinal member/connecting element located in the longitudinal axial channel of the spacer capable of being coupled to a bone structure of a patient by at least two securing members (see FIGS. 6c-d and 10).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 44-45, 49-51 and 55-57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Hyman (US Pat 3669133).

Hyman discloses the claimed invention except for the device being made of biocompatible materials, such as stainless steel, synthetic and metal-synthetic materials. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the spacer element of a biocompatible material, such as stainless steel, or a synthetic or metal-synthetic, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. In re Leshin, 125 USPQ 416.

Claims 44-45, 49-51 and 55-57 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Paul et al. (US 20040236327).

Paul et al. disclose the claimed invention except for the device being made of biocompatible metal, synthetic and metal-synthetic materials. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to construct the spacer element of a biocompatible metal, or a synthetic or metal-synthetic, since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. In re Leshin, 125 USPQ 416.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 08/28/2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that the device of Hyman is not "configured to be coupled to a bone structure of a patient" and "configured to engage a bone structure of a patient", a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. The walking cane of Hyman is capable of being coupled to a bone structure merely via the touching of the cane/collapsible device to the bone structure; therefore, it meets the functional requirement currently recited in the claims.

In response to new amendments to the claims, other prior art has also been applied.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within

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TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mary Hoffman whose telephone number is 571-272-5566. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 9:00-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo C. Robert can be reached on 571-272-4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

mch


EDUARDO C. ROBERT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER